

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method for use in a computer system, said computer system having a graphical operating system, for switching between a plurality of open application windows,
5 comprising:

monitoring for switching input indicative of a desire to switch from a current open application window to another of the plurality of open application windows;

upon receipt of the switching input, displaying a preview for one of the plurality of open application windows;

monitoring for display input indicative of a desire to make the displayed preview the new current open application window; and

upon receipt of the display input, switching the display from the current open application window to the new current open application window.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying, along with the preview,
15 an icon and a text description associated with the preview.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising, upon receipt of the switching input, displaying a preview for each of the plurality of open application windows.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising displaying, along with the preview for each of the plurality of open application windows, an icon and a text description associated
20 with a corresponding preview.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of open application windows is ranked according to an activation hierarchy, and wherein the displayed preview is the

window immediately succeeding the current open application window in the activation hierarchy.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

monitoring, after display of the preview, for additional input indicative of a desire
5 to view a preview of the next open application window in the activation hierarchy; and

upon receipt of the additional input, displaying a preview for the next open
application window in the activation hierarchy.

7. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for
performing the method as recited in claim 1.

8. A computer system having a processor, memory, display, and an operating
environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 1.

9. A method for use in a computer system, said computer system having a
graphical operating system, for switching between a plurality of open windows that are ranked
according to an activation hierarchy comprising:

15 monitoring for a switching activation signal;

upon receipt of the switching activation signal, displaying a preview of the next
open window in the activation hierarchy;

monitoring for a display command to activate and display the window
corresponding to the displayed preview; and

20 upon receipt of the display command, activating the open window corresponding
to the displayed preview.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising displaying, along with the preview, an icon and a text description associated with the preview.

11. The method of claim 9, further comprising, upon receipt of the switching activation signal, displaying a preview for each of the plurality of open application windows.

5 12. The method of claim 9, further comprising:

monitoring for a next preview signal; and

upon receipt of the next preview signal, displaying a preview of the window immediately succeeding the window corresponding to the currently displayed preview in the activation hierarchy.

10 13. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method as recited in claim 9.

14. A computer system having a processor, memory, display, and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 9.